

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 28 June 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the decision adopted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at its 40th meeting, held at Addis Ababa on 6 October 2005. I also refer to Security Council resolution 1633 (2005), of 21 October 2005, which established an International Working Group to assist the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in the implementation of its programme and consolidate and strengthen the existing follow-up mechanisms.

Please find attached the text of the communiqué issued by the International Working Group at the conclusion of its eighth ministerial meeting, held in Abidjan on 23 June 2006 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would bring this communiqué to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. Annan



Annex

Final communiqué of the eighth ministerial meeting of the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, 23 June 2006

1. The eighth ministerial meeting of the International Working Group was held in Abidjan on 23 June 2006 under the joint chairmanship of Mr. Rodolphe Adada, Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Francophonie of the Congo, and Mr. Pierre Schori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire. The meeting was attended by Ministers of France, Ghana, Niger and South Africa, the High Representative for the elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States and representatives of Benin, Guinea, Nigeria, the African Union, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the World Bank.

2. The Group considered the seventh report of the Mediation Group. It heard a statement by the Prime Minister, who was accompanied by the Minister of State in charge of reconstruction and reintegration, on the progress achieved and the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the road map. It also heard the report of the High Representative for the elections on the state of progress in the electoral process.

3. The Group expressed its appreciation to the Prime Minister for the measures he had taken or planned to take to consolidate the momentum generated by the pilot project of mobile court hearings and the pre-cantonment of combatants.

4. The Group greatly appreciated the Prime Minister's initiative to launch, on 22 June 2006, peace and reconciliation missions entrusted in particular to former parliamentarians. It demands that their emoluments be paid in their entirety and without discrimination so that they can devote themselves exclusively to the peace and reconciliation missions as envisaged in the communiqué of the International Working Group dated 15 January 2006 (S/2006/79, annex), pursuant to Security Council resolution 1633 (2005).

5. Despite the progress achieved, the Group notes that, four months before the deadline set by Security Council resolution 1633 (2005) for the holding of elections, a number of concrete measures still have to be taken with regard to critical aspects of the road map, in particular the dismantling and disarmament of militias, the redeployment of the State administration, the nationwide launching of the identification and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes and the preparation of the electoral process.

6. The Group stresses that the implementation, without delay, of the identification and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes throughout the country is essential in order to accelerate the electoral process, including the preparation of complete and reliable voters' lists. In this regard, it encourages the Prime Minister to take the necessary measures to ensure the speedy resumption of the mobile court hearings and their completion within the established deadlines.

7. The Group expresses its deep concern about the repeated postponement of the launching of the dismantling and disarmament of militias, which could jeopardize the preparations for the disarmament and demobilization of combatants. In this regard, the Group calls upon the competent national authorities to set a definitive date, in consultation with the militia leaders, for the beginning of the process of dismantling and disarming the militias before the end of June 2006.

8. The Group takes note of the commitment by the parties to completing the pre-cantonment of combatants within two weeks and welcomes the resumption of the dialogue between the chiefs of staff of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles. Nevertheless, the Group stresses that this dialogue must not be used as a pretext to reopen the debate on questions on which agreement has already been reached between the parties, as recorded in the timetable signed in Yamoussoukro on 9 July 2005. It urges both chiefs of staff to closely involve the impartial forces in their discussions with a view to finalizing the calendar for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. It expects both parties not to obstruct the monitoring of the pre-cantonment and, generally, DDR operations, which the impartial forces have to carry out.

9. The Group expresses its concern about the slow pace of the extension throughout the national territory of the activities of the Independent Electoral Commission and the National Commission for the Supervision of Identification. It requests the Prime Minister to take urgent steps to earmark appropriate budgetary resources in order to give impetus to the electoral process. The Group recalls the exclusive responsibility of the Independent Electoral Commission for the entire electoral process, as recognized in the Pretoria agreements. It urgently appeals to all parties to refrain from any action that might jeopardize the independence of the Independent Electoral Commission or threaten the security of its members.

10. The Group once again issues a warning to all those who, directly or indirectly, obstruct or intend to obstruct the implementation of the road map. It invites the Sanctions Committee of the Security Council, established by resolution 1572 (2004), to take appropriate measures against them.

11. The Group will hold its next meeting on 20 July 2006 in Côte d'Ivoire.